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PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

PATENT APPLICATION
DOCKET NO. 3572

IN THE
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

INVENTOR(S):	Christopher Shawn Bartimus		
SERIAL NO.:	10/685,999	GROUP ART UNIT:	2859
FILED:	October 14, 2003	EXAMINER:	Mirellys Jagan
SUBJECT:	String Line Tool and Sheaths Therefor		

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE TO EXAMINER'S ACTION MAILED AUGUST 25, 2004

In response to the Examiner's Action mailed August 25, 2004, please enter the following amendments and remarks of record.

AMENDMENTS

Please make the following amendments to the Description, Drawings, and Claims as shown on separate sheets:

In the Drawings:

Please amend Figures 7a and 16 as shown in the attached proposed Figures.

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In the Description:

Please amend paragraph 0058 of the Description, as indicated below.

The locking system arm preferably automatically engages or sets in or on a latching surface of the tool, which may be a recessed surface or a protruding surface of the tool, for example, located 1/3 - 2/3 of the way from the front end of the tool body to the rear end of the tool body. When the tool 250 is inserted into the sheath 210, the locking system engages and is released only manually when the user wishes to remove the tool. Preferably, the locking system arm 143 comprises a latch 141 that catches in or on a latching surface of the tool (which may be a recess 20 in the tool body or a protruding ridge of surface (not shown)) when the tool slides into place against the limiting surface of the front sheath portion and the curved walls 313. The latch is preferably biased into the closed position, that is, biased inward toward the center of the cavity, and, hence, toward the tool surface. The latch preferably "snaps" into the tool recess when the tool is properly in place in the sheath. This way, the tool is easily and conveniently sheathed, and yet is not easily or accidentally unlocked or dropped out of the sheath. The recess 20 into which the latch 141 snaps is preferably the thumb pocket of the tool, but may be other recesses or even protrusions on which the locking arm could catch. For example, the sheath may be adapted to use with the tools described in U.S. Patent 5,720,113, and the arm may catch in the recess in which the L-shaped hook resides. The forward wall of the recess (or alternatively a protrusion or ridge area, not shown, in a similar area of the tool) is the wall or structure against which the latch abuts and catches, thus preventing rearward movement of the tool out of the sheath.